



Proposed Three Rivers Stone Quarry Expansion Environmental Impact Statement November 2005



Bureau of Land Management Scoping Notice. Challis Field Office – Bulletin 1.

SCOPING NOTICE

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to consider the proposed expansion of the Three Rivers Stone Quarry, located 4.5 miles east of the town of Clayton and 17 miles southwest of the town of Challis in Custer County, Idaho. The public scoping process to identify specific issues and develop planning criteria, has started and will continue through December 5, 2005. The scoping process will include an evaluation of the needs and interests of the public.

L&W Stone, Inc. (L&W Stone) of Orland, California proposes to expand the Three Rivers Stone Quarry by increasing the mine production and by beginning new exploration activities. The expansion is necessary in order to supply increasing market demand. L&W Stone mines large sheets of locatable flagstone at the Three Rivers Stone Quarry site. The flagstone is used in both indoor and outdoor decorative construction. L&W Stone has submitted an Amended Plan of Operations for the quarry to the BLM, as required by Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subpart 3809. The BLM completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) regarding the Amended Plan of Operations, signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and issued an approval of the project. As a result of a lawsuit filed by Western Watershed Project of Hailey, Idaho, the BLM was ordered by a Federal District Court to complete an EIS for the Amended Plan of Operations submitted by L&W Stone.



View from the Three Rivers Stone Quarry looking north along the Salmon River.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

The EIS will analyze the potential environmental impacts of the expansion and daily operation of the Three Rivers Stone Quarry. The planning process will comply with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The BLM will work closely with interested parties to identify the management decision that is best suited to the needs of the public. This collaborative process will take into account local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

PROPOSED PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed operations would consist of an administration area on the valley floor and two open-pit (surface) mines on the adjacent ridge: the main pit (Pit 1) and a secondary pit (Pit 2). In addition, there would be development (waste) rock storage areas, haul roads, interceptor trenches, sediment traps, roll berms, roll ditches, explosives magazines, portable trailers, storage tanks, and a variety of transport vehicles and heavy equipment.

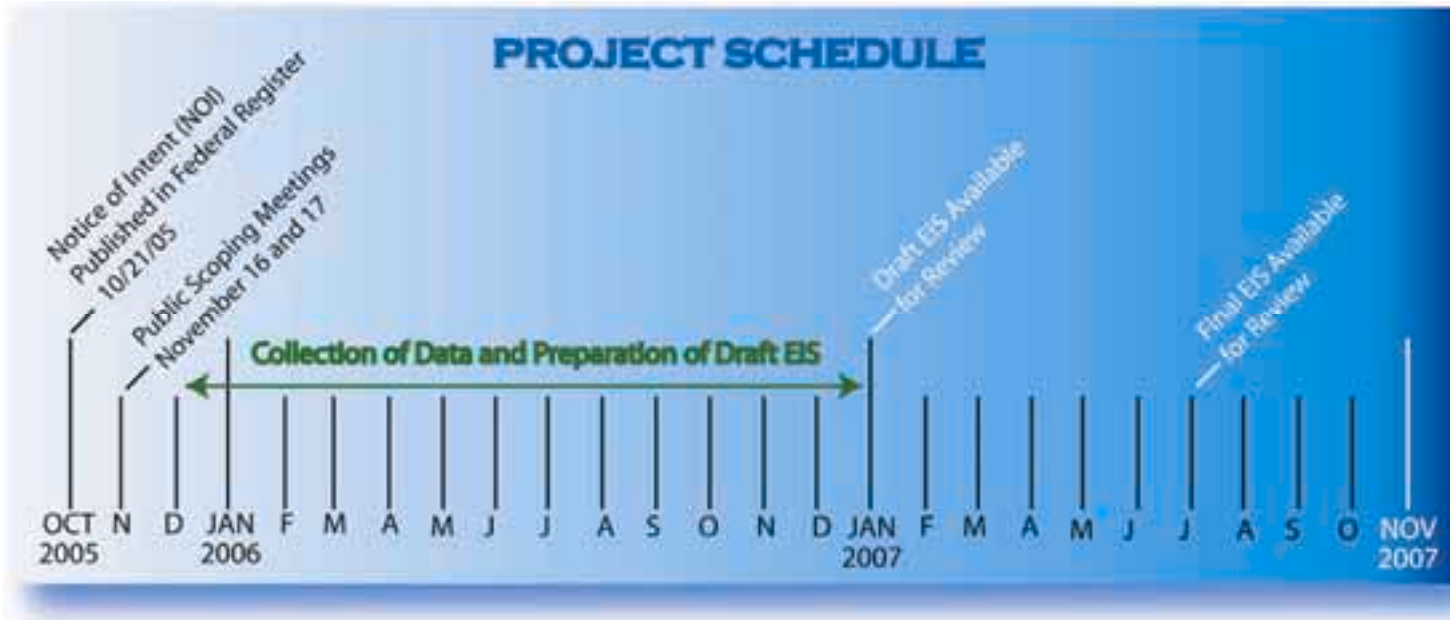
The proposed operations, which could operate up to 40 years, would expand the present surface disturbance to a maximum at any one time of 166 acres. The expansion would occur by increasing the mine production and by beginning new exploration activities.



ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SCHEDULE

The Draft EIS, which is scheduled for completion in early 2007, will be circulated for public review and comment. In the Final EIS, the BLM will consider and respond to comments received on the draft. The Final EIS is expected to be published in the fall of 2007.

A range of reasonable alternatives, including an alternative considering no action, as required by NEPA, will be developed and analyzed in the EIS. The potential impact of the alternatives will be assessed and the results of the analysis will be documented in a Draft EIS, which the public will be asked to review. Comments on the Draft EIS received from agencies and the public will be considered and incorporated into the Final EIS.



OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The first opportunity for you to participate will be the upcoming public scoping meetings. These meetings will be of an "Open House" format and will include displays providing project information and an overview of the planning and EIS process. Details of the time and location of the meetings are provided below. The meetings will also be announced through media releases. You are invited to attend one or both of the two scoping meetings or send us your written comments on the enclosed pre-addressed comment form before the scoping period ends on December 5, 2005.

CHALLIS, IDAHO
Wednesday, November 16, 2005
4-7:30 p.m.
Challis High School Cafeteria
100 High Street

BOISE, IDAHO
Thursday, November 17, 2005
4-7:30 p.m.
North Junior High School Cafeteria
1105 North 13th Street

IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

During a 45-day scoping period, affected tribes, landowners, concerned citizens, special interest groups, local governments, and any other interested parties are invited to comment on the scope of the EIS. Scoping will help the BLM identify the full range of issues and alternatives that should be addressed in the EIS.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ON DEIS

BLM will provide other opportunities throughout the process to discuss the status of the process, and BLM will ask you to review the Draft EIS, which will be released to the public for a 45-day period. During that 45-day period, the BLM may conduct public meetings to accept comments on the draft document. Written comments also will be accepted at that time.



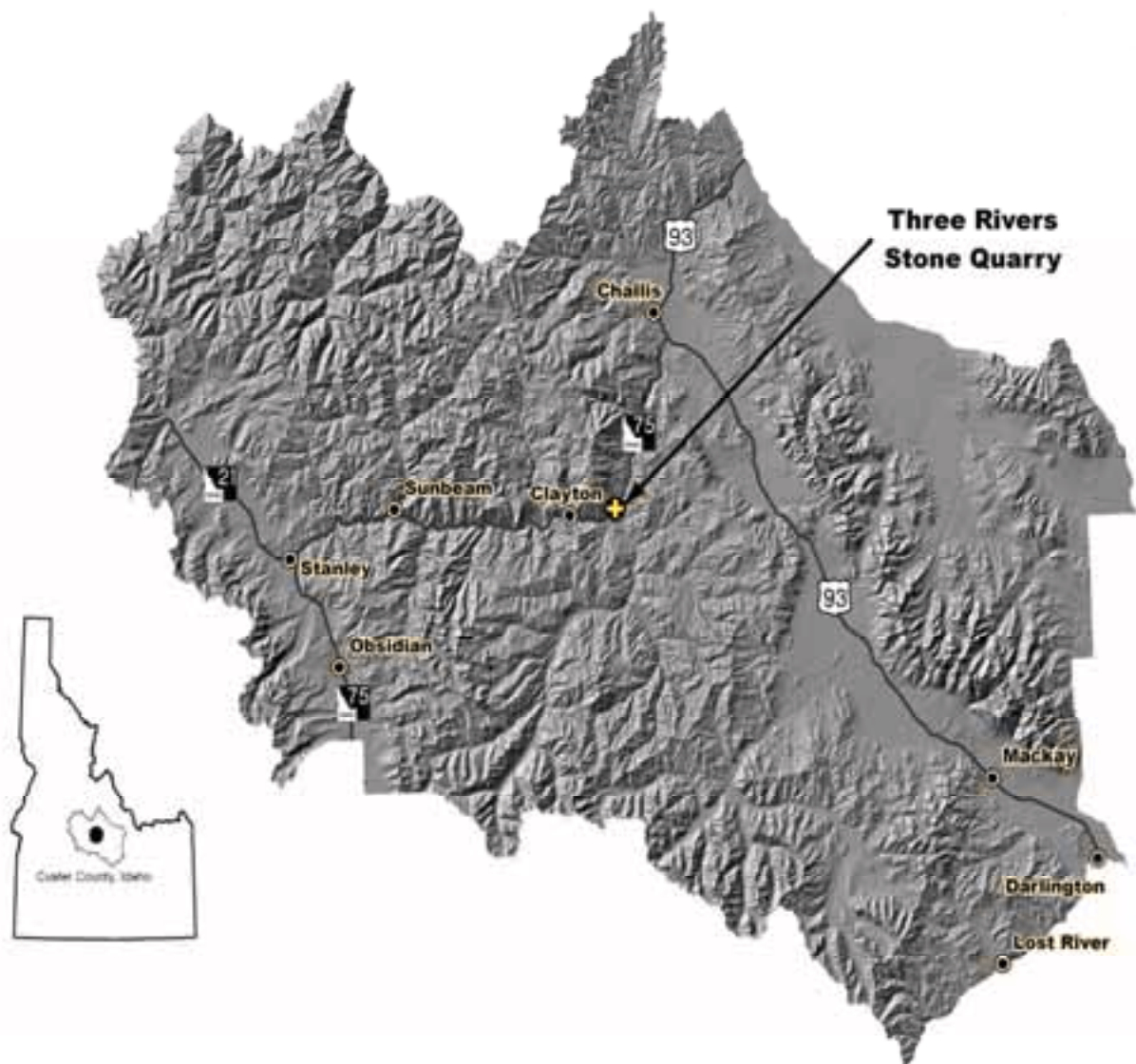
CONTACT WITH THE BLM

A mailing list will be maintained throughout the entire process. If you wish to remain on the mailing list, please let us know by sending the enclosed comment form back to us.

Comments regarding the proposed expansion of the Three Rivers Stone Quarry should be sent to:

Project Manager
Three Rivers Stone Quarry Expansion EIS
Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls Field Office
1405 Hollipark Drive
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

For additional information, contact Chuck Horsburgh, Project Manager, Idaho Falls Field Office at (208-524-7530).



General Vicinity Map of the Three Rivers Stone Quarry Project



Bureau of Land Management
Idaho Falls Field Office
1405 Hollipark Drive
Idaho Falls, ID 83401